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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

SUBJECT Construction of Skoda Armament Plant at
Banovce nad Bebravou

DATE DISTR. 24 JAN 51

NO. OF PAGES 2

NO. OF ENCLS. 1
(LISTED BELOW)

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. The construction of a new armament plant for the Skoda Works was started at Banovce nad Bebravou in the fall of 1949 by the Czechoslovak National Building Enterprises of Bratislava. About 20 buildings of various sizes were planned, as follows:
 - a. 4 large halls, 450 x 120 m
 - b. 1 large administration building
 - c. 1 large building to house single employees
 - d. 10 houses for employees with families
 - e. Plant kitchen, stores, etc.
2. Under construction at the beginning of October 1950 were the four halls and the ten 2-story family houses; foundations for the administration building and the building for single employees had been laid. The masonry of one of the halls and of the ten family houses was already completed. Machinery had been brought into the hall but remained unpacked. Construction of a second hall was nearing completion. All the buildings were to be of ferroconcrete construction and were to have cellars.
3. Architect Houska, a Czech, was supervisor of construction. He is stated to be a good friend of Antonin Zapotocky, the Czech Prime Minister; both of them were in a concentration camp together. Houska's deputy was Ing. Schubert, a Czech, who handled the construction plans. Those plans were locked in a safe in Schubert's office, and only Schubert had access to them.
4. In October 1950 there were about 450-500 employees working there in two shifts daily without interruption. Most of the construction workers were Slovaks; the majority of the technicians and office employees were Czechs. Chairman of the Communist workers' organization was Chronik, a Slovak. Secretary was Stanislav Sujan, cadre trustee was Kobida, a Slovak, and his deputy was Minarik, also a Slovak. Nominated for county cadre trustee with the rank of inspector was one Medek, a Slovak.

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5. The plant had already been encircled by a fence and entrance was permitted only to those with identity cards plus photographs which were issued to employees by Houska. The plant was watched by guards wearing blue overalls and armed with pistols; they also wore on their arms a red ribbon bearing the inscription "plant guard".
6. Morale of the workers was bad, especially after 1 October 1950 when they were forced to work according to new labor norms, which resulted in much lower wages. All other methods of wage payments were prohibited.

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